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between the Hyksos rulers of Lower Egypt and the Pharaohs of Upper Egypt. Joseph probably learned from a fellow prisoner of the plans being made by the Theban king to seize Ha-Uar and the regulator of the canal. Hence his prediction of the year-long famine, and the storing of grain and provisions before the campaign from the south should finally be set on foot. At last the catastrophe came: the regulating dam at Ha-Uar was seized and cut by the Theban forces; the Nile failed to overflow its banks in the Delta, and the predicted famine arrived. The recovery of Ha-Uar several years later was followed by the reconstruction of the dam and the restoration of Lower Egypt to its normal productivity.

In regard to the plagues of Egypt, the author shows that not only did they happen "in the field of Zoan," or northeastern part of the Delta, but that they might happen there today under a combination of low Niles and internal disturbances which should interfere with the irrigation system. He also proves that eight of the ten plagues could have occurred only in this northeastern part of the Delta and that they were inoperative in "the land of Goshen," or Wadi Tumilat district inhabited by the Israelites, because of the abundant subsoil water in this valley. Moses took advantage of a low Nile to tamper with the water channels in the Zoan, or Tanis district, and to bring on a succession of plagues, seven of which followed in a sequence of cause and effect.

The author rejects as impossible the traditional Red Sea route of the exodus from Egypt and revives Brugsch's theory of a course along the Pelusiac branch of the Nile across the Desert of Shur to the Mediterranean, and thence to Edom. This theory he supports with fresh arguments in which Moses again appears as an engineer hero comparable to Heracles. The term translated "Red Sea" in the Bible means reedy sea or reedy river or fluvial bog. Reference in Exodus is to an old arm of the Nile temporarily severed from the main stream, probably the Pelusiac branch, which Moses may have dammed up to flood the upper basin and drown the growing crops of Zoan and which he suddenly released to overwhelm the advancing Egyptians as they were crossing the muddy channel below the dam. Similar miracles performed by Moses as instrument of Jehovah resolve themselves into rational achievements normal to a man familiar, as Moses doubtless was, with the principles of water control.

Ellen Churchilll Semple

A Medieval Persian Treatise on Geography

G. Le Strange, transl. **The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat-al-Qulūb composed by Ḥamd-Allāh Mustawfī of Qazwīn in 740 (1340).** xix and 322 pp.; index ("E. J. W. Gibb Memorial" Series, Vol. 23, Part II). E. J. Brill, Leyden; Luzac & Co., London, 1919. 8s. 9½ x 6½ inches.

Guy Le Strange has rendered a great service to students of the historical geography of the Near East by bringing out a critical edition of the Persian text together with an English translation of this important work. Western readers are now able to gain a clear and accurate idea of what is probably the most significant medieval Persian treatise on geography.

As a whole, the Nuzhat-al-Qulūb consists of an introduction on astronomy and mathematical geography, two non-geographical books, a third book on regional geography, and a conclusion on the marvels of Iran. (See G. Le Strange: Mesopotamia and Persia under the Mongols, in the Fourteenth Century A.D., *Asiatic Society Monographs*, Vol. 5, London, 1903, pp. 11 et sqq.) Much of the Nuzhat-al-Qulūb was translated by C. Barbier de Meynard in the notes to his "Dictionnaire . . . de la Perse" (Paris, 1861). Like most of the historical and geographical writings of the Orient, it lacks originality; as Le Strange states in his preface, "Ḥamd-Allāh quotes largely from older authorities, and in most cases we possess the texts which he used. However, in many of his accounts of towns and descriptions of provinces he has added something of his own, from personal observation, to what he has translated not very accurately from the Arabic texts." He "gives a graphic picture of the lands of Īran in the latter days of the Īl-Khāns" [Mongol rulers of Persia and Mesopotamia]. The wealth of topographic detail in the chapter on this part of the world is immense, and the account of Asia Minor "is unique and of unknown origin."

Furthermore, the Nuzhat cannot fail to appeal to whosoever is interested in the evolution of scientific and geographic knowledge as a whole. As an example of a type of medieval geographical treatise, this edition serves the same purpose for Persian that Reinaud's famous "Géographie d'Aboulféda" serves for Arabic geography, and we may well be sorry that Le Strange has not as yet seen fit to make the work complete in this respect by publishing a translation of the introductory part on mathematical geography in addition to the regional chapters. Nevertheless, in the latter there are occasional striking passages. Chapter 16 (p. 180), for instance, begins with a clear exposition of the processes of erosion and the genesis of mountains:

"In philosophical works it is explained how, earth and water being mingled together, from the viscosity that is in the earth, the heat of the sun causes the same to harden, thus turning it to stone even as fire bakes the clay-brick. But the sun's heat then beginning to act on the stone, this loses its hardness and is broken up; which process continually accelerated by the succession of many nights and days cracks appear, splitting the rocks, which same are thus again turned to earth. Then by the action of earthquakes mountain peaks are demolished, while by the blowing of the winds and the running waters the soft earth is carried from one place to another, yet all that is rock and hard soil will remain fixed, whereby heights and hollows are formed, and it is these heights that are the mountain ranges."

In Chapter 18 (p. 200) there is an account of the origin of springs from rain water that contrasts very favorably with the fabulous hypotheses on this subject current in Europe at the time. There is not a little incidental weather and climate lore, and the cause of the tides in the "Seven Seas" is ascribed to the moon, although in the "Circumambient Ocean" Mustawfī believed in but one yearly tide, produced by the sun alone. Certainly Ḥamd-Allāh was not averse to recording in immense detail all kinds of geographic marvels and monstrosities, but they serve to set off rather than detract from the brilliance of those gems of accurate observation and precise thought that are embedded in the pages of this work.

The Population of India: Conditions and Tendencies According to Census Statistics

P. K. Wattal. **The Population Problem in India: A Census Study.** vii and 83 pp. Bennett, Coleman & Co., Ltd., Bombay, Calcutta, and London, 1916. 1 rupee. 8½ x 5½ inches.

The author—is he a native of India?—sees the population increasing faster than the means of subsistence and believes the only remedy is "voluntary restraint in married life." But of this he has no hope.

The two-thirds of the Indians who are Hindus have the economic misfortune to be required by their religion to marry and beget sons. For they take their religion seriously. All but four per cent of the women between 15 and 40 years are married or have been married. For all India the percentage is six, for the Mohammedans largely follow the example of their Hindu neighbors. In every thousand Mohammedan girls under five years of age five are married, among Hindus 18. In every thousand between five and ten years for Mohammedans 65 and for Hindus 132 are married. Between the ages 15 and 40, 860 of a thousand Hindu women and 837 of a thousand Mohammedans live in matrimony. Forty-seven per cent of the population is married, almost exactly eight per cent more than the United States.

The Indian birth rate of 39 in a thousand is one of the highest in the world. So is the death rate of 34. The poverty of the people is extreme. The loss of children by death is little lamented, provided it does not leave the family without sons. There is no emigration from the country to speak of, and so little migration that barely nine per cent of the population are enumerated away from their birthplace. Seventy per cent of them are engaged in agriculture on little holdings of an acre or so per capita. The number engaged in manufactures is falling off as factories become more numerous, for the machines introduced displace many more hand workers than they occupy. Indian industry is in the transition stage. The factory hands do not move to town with their families but leave the family on the land while they work in town, so that large towns like Bombay are apt to have a great disproportion of men in their population. These factory hands look forward to a return to the land. The town exercises no attraction on them apart for the high, steady wages. But, as the number employed is diminishing, industry cannot be said to be directly increasing the national means of support.

It has been said India has much waste land to reclaim, especially by new works of irrigation. Wattal questions this. He finds figures proposed by different writers both for and against. He thinks there is less available land than commonly reported, except in Assam and Burma, and that further irrigation is of nearly prohibitive cost.